GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:931
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2005
FORECASTING OF DRAUGHT FLOODS
Manvendra Singh Shri

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Meteorological Department's in the country has not been able to accurately forecast the natural calamities including drought & floods in the country over the years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has enquired/propose to enquire into the matter to ascertain the reasons therefor;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government for accurate forecasting of natural calamities?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT(SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) to (e): The India Meteorological Department (IMD) provides necessary meteorological inputs to the Central Water Commission which is the nodal agency for flood forecasting. It is difficult to forcast the extent of floods in any specific area because it depends on various other factors such as; infrastructure for drainage in addition to rainfall. It is possible to predict heavy rainfall almost a week in advance but the extent and distribution of rainfall is difficult to predict. A meteorological drought is said to occur when the seasonal rainfall received over an area is less than 75 per cent of its long term average value (normally 30 years). It is not possible to forecast drought or drought like situation in a specific part of the country, well in advance. However, IMD's forecasts of monsoon rainfall can be used in a limited way for drought preparedness.

IMD has initiated several actions to improve its capabilities to monitor and predict natural calamities. These steps include improvement in observational network both remote and ground based and introduction of dynamical forecasting models.